A Christmas Delusion

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A Christmas Delusion

by APastandFutureNerd

Summary

It's Christmas Eve. Hannibal and Will celebrate it together. Will has invited another guest of his past to the dining room and Hannibal has no other choice than to cater to the surprise guest and play along for a while, pretending everything is alright but in reality nothing is as it seems.

Notes

This work is loosely inspired by an amazing fic written by Lovetincture called "Saudade" which is part of the series "Way Down In The Everyone Gets There".

But mostly I wrote this because I needed an outlet.

Please mind the tags. Non-Con refers to the drugging and (past) restraining. No smut in this one.

Songs to go with this one:

Mr. Kitty - Unstable
Brian Reitzell - Bloodfest / Digestivo Pt.2
Bach - Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV 140

- Inspired by Saudade by lovetincture

A luscious smell of braised meat, pastry, roasted onions, and vegetables wafted through the cleavage of the kitchen door into the dining room with the long, dark, massive dinner table. Enormous white deer antlers were mounted on each crimson walls of the spacious room as well as some paintings. It was gloomy in the room, as the lamp on the ceiling had been dimmed. Most of the spare illumination originated from the soft yellowish flickering light of three white long candles, mounted on candle holders in the shape of a white skull. It created an intimate, romantic yet also an eerie atmosphere. The skull itself was placed on a bed of red, blue, black and white petals. Hyacinths, roses, all sorts of flowers.

A small green Christmas tree adorned with some silver and golden ornaments was placed on another small wooden table near the vast glass window at the end of the room. Music rippled through the open door. Hannibal had turned on the Hi-Fi and *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 140* was currently playing. The soprano and bass singers were singing a duet. An aria which was about a couple pining for each other, yearning for completion and consummation. But in fact it was about the bond between human souls and God being compared to a marriage.

The table was set, everything was nearly ready. The only thing missing was the food. Three fine silver plates of Christofle, as well as three pairs of fine silver cutlery and wine glasses, were neatly placed on the table cloth. Will was already seated and smiled at a young girl sitting at the end of the table. It was Abigail. She had wrapped a blue scarf around her throat. He smiled as much as he could, as the healing scar on his cheek still made it difficult. Abigail beamed at him. A charming and genuine smile. “So the hunt was successful, I take it?” She remarked casually with raised eyebrows, letting her blue eyes roam over the table before it flickered to the kitchen where the delicious smell was coming from.

Will chuckled at her insinuation. “Oh yes, it was”, he answered in a soft voice. He poured her and himself a glass of fine Cabernet Sauvignon standing between the plate meant for Hannibal and him. A new scent mingled with the present flavours in the air - a sweet, rich comforting aroma of vanilla and sugar. Hannibal was already preparing the dessert. Or on the verge of finishing it.

Abigail closed her eyes and reveled in the luring fragrance, taking a sniff. “The smell is too die for”, she assessed , “Hannibal is such a good cook.” “Indeed”, Will replied with a warm smile.

”Bread pudding, I guess”, Abigail suspected, sniffing the air once more. ”It had always been my favorite dessert.”

She raised the wine glass with her left hand. “To the successful kill and your relationship”, she countered with a smirk tugging on her lips. Will mirrored her movement, moving his right hand to clank his glass with hers. “And to our family”, she added.

“To our family”, Will replied quietly, his smile fading a bit when his glass didn’t make a clangor and merely spilled some wine. His eyes were unfocused for a moment and expressionless as disappointment overwhelmed him.

A tense and heavy silence followed the short speech, disrupting the serene atmosphere like a sharp knife. They held eye contact but did not utter a word. Both were scared to speak out the unpleasant truth. That this was not real and only happened in Will's head. That Abigail had died a few years ago because of his self-righteous betrayal.

Steps resounded in the room, announcing the arrival of the host but Will kept his eyes fixed on Abigail, ignoring him. Hannibal carried a large silver tray with Wellington roast, the meat of their latest victim wrapped in pastry, into the dining room. He stopped as he witnessed Will raising his glass, spilling a bit of the wine on the table cloth below in his attempt to clink it against the one he imagined to be raised while talking to himself.

A concerned frown appeared on his face. Hannibal wanted to ask him why he had not taken his medication but for the sake of Christmas Eve, he remained silent and granted him the sentimental moment. He wondered why Will hallucinated about Abigail again. Whether he had never truly gotten past the trauma and only pushed it back into his unconsciousness in the past years.

With a gentle and swift movement, he placed the large tray with the roast, garnished with some leaves of kale underneath it, on the table before him. Steam rose up from the roast. It was still blazing hot as it came directly from the oven. The pastry was golden and crispy. Will leaned over the table to squeeze Abigail's hand in comfort.

"Look how delicious it is ", Will commented in a soft voice, his thumb brushing over her hands.

"Yes...it looks amazing", Abigail replied with a wry smile on her lips. Her blue eyes were still showing melancholy and insecurity. She quickly brushed away a single tear and threw her hair back to gain back composure.

Hannibal hurled another concerned glance at Will then discreetly retreated into his kitchen once more, decided not to disturb Will's delusions by asking him to help him fetch the side dishes.

"He doesn't know I am there, does he?" Abigail commented on that, her lips trembling, lowering her head. "He has forgotten me."

"No", Will replied, squeezing her hands once more. "He knows you're there. You're always with us", he added quietly. But not totally convinced. Abigail pulled back her hand and looked sad.

A few moments later Hannibal returned with the side dishes on another tray, watching Will talking to a guest who wasn't truly there. Only in the delusions of his broken mind. He quietly carved slices of the Wellington roast with a sharp kitchen knife and put them on the plates, including the one meant for Abigail, along with a serving of glazed vegetables and the thick, rich cranberry sauce.

"See, he hasn't forgotten you", Will cheered her up, playfully boxing her shoulders with his right fist.

In reality, he only hit air.

Hannibal gazed at the empty space and decided not to reproach Will over his delusions and instead take part in it. Not today. “It’s good to see you again, Abigail”, he remarked serenely, pouring himself a glass of red wine.

“How could I forget such a bright young girl?” Hannibal remarked with a genuine smile. “It’s been too long.”

Abigail chuckled, appearing to be more cheerful again. “It’s good to see I’m not totally forgotten”, she grinned, looking from one to another before determinedly sinking her knife and fork into the wellington roast and drenching a piece of it in the sweet cranberry sauce.

“Christ, this is fantastic”, Abigail exclaimed as she had swallowed down the pastry and meat. “Compliments to the chef.”

“It’s my pleasure”, Hannibal replied with a fond smile and bowed his head.

“Merry Christmas, Will and Abigail”, Hannibal hummed and raised his wine glass into the air, seeking eye contact with Abigail and Will, before taking a sip.

“Happy Christmas, Hannibal ”, Abigail and Will replied in their merry voices.

For the rest of the dinner, Will and Abigail were chatting avidly. Will explained to her in detail what had happened after she had left, how they had slain the Great Red Dragon and decided to live together. But Hannibal held himself back and observed him. Seeing Will in a state like that made him almost regret what he had done to her some years ago. Almost. Being with Will, having Will on his own was something he preferred, though. Hannibal’s hand stiffened as he was being ignored and decided he needed to slip the drops of the antipsychotic into the cream on top.

Grabbing his empty and the half empty plate of Will, Hannibal excused himself from the table. After putting the dishes down on the sink and fetching the tray with the half-eaten roast to store it into the fridge, he walked to the shelf where he stored medicine, bandaids and drugs. He looked for the bottle of liquid antipsychotic and antidepressant, anticipating Will had put it back and not used it. The bottle was still full. Will had refused taking them like a stubborn child. Hannibal sighed. Even though his madness was compelling, especially when they killed together, some other sides of it were annoying him. Will crying in his sleep, screaming for Molly. Will yelling and fighting against his restraints on the chair when he was forced to eat something to prevent further weight loss and absolutely didn’t want to.

Hannibal returned with another tray. Abigail let out a triumphant “Ha, I knew it”, when she noticed Hannibal approaching with the dessert.

It was indeed bread pudding decorated with white cream, a cherry placed on top and chocolate sprinkles. Hannibal handed Will his dessert first before giving Abigail her portion. Will hesitated after the first spoon, sensing that Hannibal had added medicine into his, but after feeling Hannibal’s intense stare on him he gulped the dessert down without arguing.

“This was the best bread pudding I have ever eaten”, Abigail remarked smiling, taking another spoonful. “Not even my dad could make a better one.”

When they had finished the dessert, With the exception of Will who never completely ate up his meal, Hannibal cleared his throat. Will kept staring at Abigail’s bread pudding which was still untouched. The medication had yet to settle in. It always took a while. He was still hallucinating, Hannibal observed, letting his cold maroon eyes wander over Will’s face and his hazy, unfocused eyes.

“Would you help me with the dishes in the kitchen,Will ?” Hannibal asked Will in a cool tone, rising up from the chair, brushing the wrinkles out of his three-piece suit.

Will squinted and finally met his gaze for the first time this evening. He nodded curtly, then rose up, slowly and reluctant, pushing the chair back against the wall to have some space to walk through.Halting for a moment at the threshold, he turned around to face Abigail who looked forlorn, still sitting at the table, her arms placed on the table as if she still was waiting for dinner to arrive. Her chest was rising and falling quickly, her hands trembling. She knew what was coming.

“Goodbye Abigail”, Will muttered and waved at hear, his voice hoarse, at the verge of cracking under his emotions.”I’m sorry I have to go. Hannibal says I have to.”

Tears welled up in her eyes. “See you next year”, she answered in a shaky, trembling voice. “Please don’t forget me”, she pleaded.Abigail’s smile disappeared. Her face grew paler until all color had gone and the whiteness transformed her back into the corpse she truly was. The wound on her throat reopened. Blood gushed down her body, her blue blouse until she grew still and the spark of life disappeared from her eyes. All that was left was her rotting, bloated carcass covered with maggots. Will closed his eyes to get rid of the disgusting picture of her dead corpse. When he opened his eyes again, she had vanished like a ghost. No one was there anymore. Only him.It had all been nothing but an illusion. A beautiful one though.

“I’ll never forget you. Until we meet again, Abigail. Merry Christmas to you wherever you are”, Will sighed into the silence, then dragged himself into the kitchen, holding Abigail’s plate with bread pudding in his hands.

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